

STATEMENT OF COUNTY READINESS

EARLY LEARNING PILOT GRANT PROGRAM

RESPONSES DUE: JUNE 30, 2014

DATE ISSUED: JUNE 4, 2014

SEND RESPONSES TO:
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Table of Contents

BACKGROUND INFORMATION	3
COUNTY SELECTION PROCESS.....	3
STATEMENT OF COUNTY READINESS	4
TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE WORKSHOPS.....	5
WRITTEN STATEMENT OF COUNTY READINESS	6
I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	7
II. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT	7
III. FAMILY ENGAGEMENT.....	7
IV. PROVIDER CAPACITY	7
V. FINANCIAL MATCH.....	8
VI. COUNTY READINESS AND PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION.....	8

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

COUNTY SELECTION PROCESS

House Enrolled Act (“HEA”) 1004, signed into law by Governor Mike Pence on March 27, 2014, establishes a pilot program to provide grants to eligible children for qualified education services (the “Early Learning Pilot Grant Program” or the “Pilot Program”). The Pilot Program will be administered by the Office of the Secretary of Family and Social Services (“FSSA”) in not more than five counties. Specifically, HEA 1004 provides the following with respect to county selection:

The program may include eligible providers in not more than five (5) counties. In determining which counties are designated as pilot counties, the office shall attempt to achieve diversity among the designated counties based on the geographical location of the counties, the population of the counties, and whether the counties are primarily rural or urban. The office shall ensure that the counties selected include a population of eligible children sufficient to conduct the longitudinal study [required by HEA 1004].

FSSA has designed a two-part selection process to identify the five counties for inclusion in the Pilot Program.

Part I: On Friday, May 23rd, FSSA convened an advisory group of early education experts, including academic researchers from Ball State, Notre Dame and Indiana University; staff from FSSA, the State Budget Agency, the Indiana Department of Education, the Center for Education and Career Innovation and the Early Learning Advisory Committee (“ELAC”); and representatives from the Indiana Chamber of Commerce, the Indiana Philanthropy Alliance and the Indiana Association for the Education of Young Children. FSSA, with the assistance of the advisory working group, considered multiple objective measures of suitability criteria including the estimated number of children not currently receiving early learning services, the number of eligible providers, and the percentage of children living in poverty in each county. After careful consideration of the data, the following eighteen counties were identified for further consideration for participation in the Pilot Program:

Allen, Bartholomew, Delaware, Elkhart, Grant, Howard, Jackson, Kosciusko, Lake, Lawrence, Madison, Marion, Noble, St. Joseph, Tippecanoe, Vanderburgh, Vigo, and Wayne.

Part II: Interested parties in each of the eighteen counties identified during Part I of the selection process are eligible to submit a statement of county readiness to FSSA. Each statement will be evaluated by a team of reviewers with knowledge of and experience with early childhood education programs. FSSA will make every effort to select reviewers from a wide variety of professions, work settings, and cultural backgrounds. Reviewers will be required to remove themselves from the evaluation

of any statement for which they have a perceived or real conflict of interest. Once the initial evaluation has been completed, respondents may be asked to clarify their statement further either orally or in writing. The results of the evaluation will be collected and shared with FSSA and the ELAC to make the final pilot county selection. The five counties will be selected in July 2014.

STATEMENT OF COUNTY READINESS

Any interested party located within one of the eighteen counties listed above may submit a statement of county readiness to FSSA for consideration. Each response must address the county-specific questions required by the statement beginning on page 6. As the purpose of the statement is to communicate *county-wide* readiness to participate in the Pilot Program, responses addressing the readiness of individual eligible providers *will not be considered*.

We strongly encourage respondents to collaborate and to identify a lead respondent when submitting their statements. A lack of coordination between county stakeholders will be considered an indication of a lack of county readiness. If no statement is received from a particular county, only the objective data already compiled by FSSA will be considered for that county in the selection process.

Responses must be submitted in the following manner:

- 1-inch margins
- Single-spaced
- 12-point font
- Typed
- Do not attach additional supplementary materials such as videotapes, CD-ROMs, files on disks, publications, press clippings, testimonial letters, etc. This information will not be reviewed.
- Late or incomplete applications will be neither accepted nor reviewed

Respondents must submit **one original and four hard copies**. Hand delivered and mailed applications will be accepted. Please allow sufficient time for postal delivery. **Responses must be received no later than 4:30 p.m. Eastern Time on June 30, 2014.** Responses received after 4:30 p.m. on June 30, 2014 will not be considered. **Absolutely NO EXCEPTIONS will be made.**

Responses must be sent to:

Melanie Brizzi
Family and Social Services Administration
402 W. Washington St.
W361, MS-02
Indianapolis, IN 46204
Email: Melanie.Brizzi@fssa.in.gov

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE WORKSHOPS

FSSA will provide two webinars to answer questions about the process and to provide limited technical assistance. FSSA will not respond directly to phone and email questions received during the response window, but will collect and address all questions during the webinars to ensure that all counties have access to the information provided.

1. June 12th at 9:30 a.m.
2. June 24th at 9:00 a.m.
3. To access the webinars, click on [this link](#).

WRITTEN STATEMENT OF COUNTY READINESS

Instructions: Your written statement may not exceed **eight (8)** single spaced pages. Additional pages will not be reviewed or considered. A copy of the language of HEA 1004 may be found on the [website](#) of the Indiana General Assembly. An authorized representative for the respondent *and any co-respondents* must sign this cover page.

RESPONDENT INFORMATION	
County:	
Legal Name:	Mailing Address:
Contact Name: Contact Title: (Single point of contact for communication)	Contact Phone: Contact Email Address:
COUNTY INFORMATION	
Co-Respondents (please list):	Estimated Number of Children to be Served (county-wide):
	Estimated Number of Eligible Providers (county-wide):
AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE	
I HEREBY CERTIFY that, to the best of my knowledge, the information contained in this statement is correct.	
Designated Representative (Printed Name):	Title:
Signature of Designated Representative:	Date:
Additional Signatures (of co-respondents, if necessary):	

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Provide a brief summary of your county's overall "readiness" to participate in the Early Learning Pilot Grant Program. Your executive summary should not exceed 500 words (or one page).

II. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- A) Provide a list of the organizations and entities, including local government, for-profit and nonprofit, within your county that currently support early learning programs or initiatives. Include a short explanation describing the nature of the organization or entity, the relevant programs or initiatives, and the organization or entity's relationship with other stakeholders in the community. Do not include eligible providers in this list, unless the provider also engages in community or county-wide early learning programs or initiatives.
- B) Describe the local funding (other than federal and state funding) supporting early learning services within your county, e.g., the amount of annual grant funding provided by corporations or foundations to fund early learning programs. Include an estimate of the number and ages of children served. Identify to what extent Title I dollars are currently being used to provide pre-kindergarten in the public schools within your county.

III. FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

- A) Describe the family engagement services available to families with young children within your county, such as Nurse Family Partnership, Healthy Families, Parents As Teachers, and other services. Describe how these services are aligned with early learning programs in your community.
- B) Describe any community or county-wide efforts to engage parents in their children's early education. Describe what assistance, if any, will be offered to eligible providers to provide such services.
- C) Describe your county's existing strategies or current plans to identify and enroll eligible children in the Pilot Program.

IV. PROVIDER CAPACITY

- A) Describe the number and type of qualified eligible providers within your county (e.g., public schools, including charter schools, and licensed or registered child care centers, homes or ministries that are level 3 or 4 in Paths to QUALITY™, or private schools that are accredited by the State Board of Education or a qualified national or regional accreditation agency). Identify the estimated capacity of these providers to serve new students.

- B) Describe your current or planned efforts to increase provider capacity within the county to ensure that there are enough seats for the children supported by the Pilot Program. Identify whether there are providers who do not currently qualify who have indicated an interest in qualifying for the program.

V. FINANCIAL MATCH

- A) Describe the steps your county has taken or will take to raise funds to assist with the required match for the Pilot Program. If your county has already received funding commitments *for the Pilot Program*, please attach the commitment letters to your Statement (this is an exception to the no supplementary material rule).
- B) Describe your county's plan, if any, to sustain support for pre-kindergarten beyond the term of the Pilot Program.

VI. COUNTY READINESS AND PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

Describe whether your county would be ready to implement the Pilot Program requirements by January 1, 2015, including evidence of plans to recruit a sufficient number of eligible children, sufficient provider capacity, and plans for family and community engagement. If your county will not be ready by January 1, 2015, explain how your county will be ready to meet the Pilot Program requirements by July 1, 2015.